<u>IN THE CLAIMS</u>

1. (Currently amended) A method of managing target documents referred to by referring documents, comprising the steps of:

identifying one or more referring documents, <u>each of the one or more referring documents</u> having at least one hypertext link pointing to a target document stored in a storage;

determining when ~~the at least one~~ <u>a</u> hypertext link in the one or more referring documents ceases to exist; and

enabling removal of the target document from the storage when the ~~at least~~ one <u>or more</u> hypertext ~~link~~ <u>links</u> ~~in the one or more referring documents ceases~~ <u>pointing to the target document cease</u> to exist.

2. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the one or more referring documents and the target document are stored in different storage devices coupled over a network.

3. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the one or more referring documents and the target document are stored in the same storage device.

4. (Canceled)

5. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of decrementing a counter for the target document when a hypertext link ceases to exist.

6. (Original) The method of claim 5, further comprising the step of:
determining whether the count for the counter of the target document equals zero.

7. (Previously presented) The method of claim 6, wherein if the counter equals zero, further comprising the step of:

sending a message to an author of the target document asking whether the author wants to delete the target document from the storage.

8. (Previously presented) A method of providing security for target documents referred to by referring documents, comprising the steps of:

identifying a first referring document having a hypertext link pointing to a target document stored in a storage, the first referring document having a security access requirement; and

applying the security access requirement to the target document.

9. (Previously presented) The method of claim 8, comprising the steps of:

identifying a second referring document having a hypertext link pointing to the target document stored in the storage:

determining whether the second referring document has the security access requirement; and

preventing the second referring document from accessing the target document if the second referring document does not have the security access requirement.

10. (Previously presented) The method of claim 9, wherein the first referring document, the second referring document and the target document are stored in different storage devices coupled over a network.

11. (Previously presented) The method of claim 9, wherein the first referring document, the second referring document and the target document are stored in the same storage device.

12. (Canceled)

13. (Previously presented) The method of claim 9, further comprising the step of decrementing a counter for the target document when a hypertext link ceases to exist.

14. (Previously presented) The method of claim 13, further comprising the step of:

determining whether the count for the counter of the target document equals zero.

15. (Previously presented) The method of claim 14, wherein if the counter equals zero, further comprising the step of:

sending a message to an author of the target document asking whether the author wants to delete the target document from the storage.

16. (Currently amended) A system for managing target documents referred to by referring documents, comprising:

a storage for storing a target document;

a processor coupled to the storage, for identifying one or more referring documents, each of the one or more referring documents having at least one hypertext link pointing to the target document;

wherein the processor determines when the at least one a hypertext link in the one or more referring documents ceases to exist; and

wherein the storage enables removal of the target document when the at least one or more hypertext link links in the one or more referring documents ceases pointing to the target document cease to exist.

17. (Previously presented) The system of claim 16, wherein the one or more referring documents and the target document are stored in different storage devices coupled over a network.

18. (Previously presented) The system of claim 16, wherein the one or more referring documents and the target document are stored in the same storage device.

19. (Canceled)

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20. (Previously presented) The system of claim 16, further comprising means for decrementing a counter for the target document when a hypertext link is ceases to exist.

21. (Previously presented) The system of claim 20, further comprising:

means for determining whether the count for the counter of the target document equals zero.

22. (Previously presented) The system of claim 21, wherein if the counter equals zero, further comprising:

means for sending a message to an author of the target document asking whether the author wants to delete the target document from the storage.

23. (Previously presented) A system of providing security for target documents referred to by referring documents, comprising:

a processor for identifying a first referring document having a hypertext link pointing to a target document stored in a storage, the first referring document having a security access requirement; and

a storage coupled to the processor, for applying the security access requirement to the target document from the first referring document.

24. (Previously presented) The system of claim 23, further comprising:

means for identifying a second referring document having a hypertext link pointing to the target document stored in the storage:

means for determining whether the second referring document has the security access requirement; and

means for preventing the second referring document from accessing the target document if the second referring document does not have the security access requirement.

25. (Previously presented) The system of claim 23, wherein the first referring document, the second referring document and the target document are stored in different storage devices coupled over a network.

26. (Previously presented) The system of claim 23, wherein the first referring document, the second referring document and the target document are stored in the same storage device.

27. (Previously presented) The system of claim 23, further comprising means for decrementing a counter for the target document when a hypertext link ceases to exist.

28. (Previously presented) The system of claim 27, further comprising:

means for determining whether the count for the counter of the target document equals zero.

29. (Previously presented) The system of claim 28, wherein if the counter equals zero, further comprising:

means for sending a message to an author of the target document asking whether the author wants to delete the target document from the storage.

30. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein a hypertext link pointing to a target document ceases to exist when the hypertext link is deleted.

31. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein a hypertext link pointing to a target document ceases to exist when a referring document having the hypertext link is deleted.